Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-20. (canceled)

21. (currently amended) A control device for a computer, the control device comprising:

a) a fixed mounting;

b) an upwardly-facing control platform engaged by and acted upon in x and y directions by at least two spaced-apart fingertips of one hand of a user,

c) transducer means for generating a vector output signal in response to x and y forces applied on said control platform by the user, said control platform being coupled to said transducer means for transmitting said applied forces thereto;

said control platform being mounted on said fixed mounting both for limited translation in x-y plane and for said x and y forces to be applied to said platform without requiring a tilt out of the x-y plane, and

~~b) transducer means for generating a vector output signal in response to x and y components of force transmitted thereto; and~~

~~c) an upwardly-facing control platform engaged by and acted upon in the x and y directions by at least two spaced-apart fingertips of one hand of a user and said control platform being mounted for limited travel in the x and y directions on said fixed mounting, said control platform being coupled to said transducer means for transmitting said components of force thereto,~~

said control device having a profile which is sufficiently low to enable it to be accommodated in the thickness of a base portion of a clamshell design laptop computer.

22. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, wherein said control platform has a substantially horizontal fingertip-engaging control surface.

23. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, wherein said control platform has an upright fingertip-engaging control surface.

24. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 23, wherein said control platform has a height in the range 1 to 5 mm.

25. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 23, wherein said control platform is disposed in a well, said well having an upright inner surface and said control platform having a peripheral outer surface facing said inner surface and spaced apart therefrom to define a gap between said inner surface and said peripheral outer surface.

26. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, further comprising a substantially horizontal wrist-rest surface.

27. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 26, wherein said control platform has an upper surface substantially flush with said wrist-rest surface.

28. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 26, wherein said control platform has an upper surface recessed with respect to said wrist-rest surface.

29. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, wherein said control platform is substantially oval in plan view.

30. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, wherein said control platform has a horizontal dimension of at least 10 mm.

31. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 30, wherein said dimension is at least 20 mm.

32. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, comprising means for restricting travel of said control platform to 50 mm or less.

33. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, comprising means for restricting travel of said control platform to 30 mm or less.

34. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, comprising means for restricting travel of said control platform to 10 mm or less.

35. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, comprising means for substantially preventing movement of said control platform in said x and y directions.

36. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, wherein said control member is mounted on a pivot mounting for enabling rotation of said control platform in the x-y plane by said user.

37. (previously presented) A keyboard incorporating a control device according to claim 21.

38. (previously presented) A computer incorporating a control device according to claim 21, the computer having a display and cursor control circuitry for displaying a cursor on said display, an output of said control device being coupled to said cursor control circuitry for controlling the movement of said cursor.

39. (previously presented) The computer according to claim 38 which is a laptop computer having a keyboard and a wrist-rest area disposed adjacent to said keyboard and wherein said control device is located in said wrist-rest area.

40. (currently amended) A laptop computer comprising a base portion having a thickness, a wrist-rest surface formed in said base portion and a pointing device located adjacent to said wrist-rest surface, said pointing device comprising:

a) a fixed mounting below said wrist-rest surface;

b) an upwardly-facing control platform engaged by and acted upon in x and y directions by at least two spaced-apart fingertips of one hand of a user,

c) transducer means for generating a vector output signal in response to x and y forces applied on said control platform by the user, said control platform being coupled to said transducer means for transmitting said applied forces thereto;

said control platform being mounted on said fixed mounting both for limited translation in x-y plane and for said x and y forces to be applied to said platform without requiring a tilt out of the x-y plane, and

~~b) transducer means for generating a vector output signal in response to x and y components of force transmitted thereto; and~~

~~c) an upwardly facing control platform engaged and acted upon in the x and y directions by a least two spaced apart fingertips of one hand of a user and mounted for limited travel in the x and y directions on said fixed mounting, said control platform being coupled to said transducer means for transmitting said x and y components of force thereto,~~

said pointing device having a profile which is sufficiently low to be accommodated in the thickness of said base portion.

41. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, which has at least one fingertip-operable switch means carried in a peripheral region of said control platform for generating a switching signal distinct from said vector output signal.

42. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, wherein said transducer means includes two transducers for sensing respective orthogonal x and y force components and generating vector output signal components.

43. (previously presented) The laptop computer according to claim 40, wherein a recess is formed in said wrist-rest surface and said control platform is disposed in said recess, said recess having an upright inner surface and said control platform having a peripheral outer surface facing said inner surface and spaced apart therefrom to define a gap between said inner surface and said peripheral outer surface.

44. (previously presented) The laptop computer according to claim 40, wherein at least one fingertip-operable switch means is coupled to said control platform for generating a switching signal distinct from said vector output signal.

45. (previously presented) The laptop computer according to claim 40, wherein said control platform has a height in the range of 1 to 5 mm.

46. (currently amended) A control device for a computer, the control device comprising:

a) a fixed mounting;

b) an upwardly-facing control platform engaged by and acted upon in x and y directions by at least two spaced-apart fingertips of one hand of a user,

c) transducer means for generating a vector output signal in response to x and y forces applied on said control platform by the user, said control platform being coupled to said transducer means for transmitting said applied forces thereto;

said control platform being mounted on said fixed mounting both for limited translation in x-y plane and for said x and y forces to be applied to said platform without requiring a tilt out of the x-y plane, and

~~b) transducer means for generating a vector output signal in response to x and y components of force transmitted thereto; and~~

~~c) an upwardly-facing control platform engaged by and acted upon in the x and y directions by at least two spaced-apart fingertips of one hand of a user and mounted on said fixed mounting for limited travel, imperceptible to the user in the x and y directions,~~

~~said control platform being coupled to said transducer means for transmitting said components of force thereto,~~

said control device having a profile which is sufficiently low to enable it to be accommodated in the thickness of a base portion of a clamshell design laptop computer.

47. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 46 wherein said control member is substantially oval in plan view.

48. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 46 wherein said control member has a dimension in the x-y plane of at least 10 mm.

49. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 46, further comprising a wrist-rest surface.

50. (currently amended) A method of controlling the position of a cursor on a computer screen comprising the steps of:

a) applying x and y components of force from at least two spaced-apart fingertips of one hand of a user to an upwardly-facing control platform of a low-profile control device for said computer, said control platform being mounted on said fixed mounting both for limited translation in x-y plane and for said x and y components of force to be applied to said platform without requiring a tilt out of the x-y plane, and~~for limited travel in the x and y directions on a fixed mounting~~;

b) transmitting forces parallel to said x and y components of force from said control platform to transducer means coupled to said control platform; and

c) generating a vector output signal from said transducer means for controlling the position of said cursor in response to said transmitted forces~~x and y components of force~~.

51. (previously presented) A method according to claim 50, wherein said control platform is mounted for travel in the x and y directions which is imperceptible to the user.

52. (previously presented) The method according to claim 50, wherein said control

platform has a shallow edge that is gripped and used in a way similar to the way fingers are used to push a desktop mouse.

53. (previously presented) The method according to claim 50, wherein the fingertips rest on a surface of said control platform in similar relative positions as when gripping a conventional computer mouse.

54. (previously presented) The method according to claim 50, wherein the index finger and/or second finger of the user operate one or more buttons as with a desktop mouse.

55. (new) The method according to claim 50 wherein tilting of said control platform out of said x-y plane is substantially prevented by an upwardly-facing planar support surface disposed underneath said control platform.